

Koh likely to keep CM post

The Star - 31/3/2007

Keng Yaik wants to ensure Gerakan stays strong in Penang

By HAH FOONG LIAN
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: Outgoing Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik has hinted that his successor Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon will most likely continue as Penang Chief Minister to keep the Perak-Penang balance in the party.

Keng Yaik said he had made his views known to Dr Koh, who will be acting Gerakan president on April 8, that he should consider the Perak-Penang factor.

He said that it was important for Dr Koh to keep the balance because Perak was still a fortress and there was a need to ensure Penang was not lost in the next general election.

Dr Koh has been Penang Chief Minister since 1990 when he took over from Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu who lost his Padang Kota state seat.

Although there had been criticism over Dr Koh's leadership as Chief Minister, Keng Yaik said credit should also be given.

Dr Koh had done well in Penang for three terms during the 1995, 1999 and 2004 general elections.

Penang only lost one Chinese seat during those three terms, Keng Yaik said.

"Tsu Koon had done much better when compared with Chong Eu," he said in an interview a week before he

»He has been CM for 17 years and he has the intellectual capacity. He will be able to lead the party«

DATUK SERI
DR LIM KENG YAIK

steps down as the party president.

"Give him time to build himself and he will be a strong personality."

Keng Yaik noted that it would be more convenient for a party president to be in a ministerial post.

"But whatever decision he (Dr Koh) makes, it should be one which is convenient to the party and not to him," said Keng Yaik, who will remain as Energy, Water and Communication Minister after he steps down.

The party will hold an EGM on April 8 to change the constitution to allow Dr Koh to become the acting president.

Keng Yaik said he was convinced



Keng Yaik: 'Tsu Koon had done much better compared with Chong Eu'

and confident with Dr Koh's capabilities. "He has been CM for 17 years and he has the intellectual capacity. He will be able to lead the party."

On who would be Dr Koh's number two, Keng Yaik said the person, who must be capable and has the support of the grassroots, had to be from Perak and must be much younger than Dr Koh.

There are at present two young leaders from Perak. They are Deputy Agriculture and Agro-Based Industries Minister Datuk Mah Siew Keong and Perak exco member Datuk Chang Ko Youn. Both were at one

time party Youth chiefs.

In Penang, Dr Koh said he was ready to accept the appointment as acting president until the general election.

"Of course I'd be ready, if not, I will be running away," he said laughingly.

■ Read more of the interview with Dr Lim in *Sunday Star*



Watch the video:
thestar.com.my/mmedia/video